

Wednesday, August 02, 2006 America Online: EricNumis

Subj: **Watermarks**  
 Date: 7/31/2006 5:47:53 PM Central Standard Time  
 From: [EricNumis](mailto:EricNumis)  
 To: [GFK@NUMISLIT.COM](mailto:GFK@NUMISLIT.COM)

Dear George:

I am writing the 5th edition of Early Paper Money of America. I have published in the 4th edition one image of a forged watermark on a counterfeit colonial bill. I have studied somewhat as to how watermarks were put in paper in the 18th century but need help. In making the paper how was the watermark applied to the screen and what was the watermark lettering or design made out of? Some have are very thin lines and others have open areas. I need help. Is it possible you can help me understand the process? I would be grateful.

My best Eric

Dear George:

Thank you for your prompt reply to my inquiry about watermarks on colonial currency. I had read the excerpt you quoted and that is why I inquired because I do not believe it describes exactly how the currency paper watermarks must have been made. I cannot see how the design could have been made of wire as the lettering has serifs and some perfect oval and other forms as well as thick and thin elements. I have never seen evidence of any attachment to the screen on which the lettering was placed.

I am now in touch with the early American paper expert at the Morgan Library and Museum in New York City and he is going to try to help.

I am trying not to be diverted from numismatic matters but mica flakes in currency paper (1764) and watermarks (both genuine and counterfeit) are intriguing me.

Eric

My best to you.

Subj: **Watermarks**  
 Date: 8/2/2006 11:06:23 AM Central Standard Time  
 From: [EricNumis](mailto:EricNumis)  
 To: [GFK@numislit.com](mailto:GFK@numislit.com)

Monday, July 31, 2006 America Online: EricNumis



Subj: **Re: Watermarks**  
 Date: 8/1/2006 3:57:44 PM Central Standard Time  
 From: [GFK@numislit.com](mailto:GFK@numislit.com)  
 To: [EricNumis@aol.com](mailto:EricNumis@aol.com)

*215 598 3066*  
*Henry Morris*  
*2nd and 3rd*  
*Yahvo.com*

Dear Eric,

It is good to hear from you.

Perhaps you have already read this but the 2002 edition of Gravell & Miller's "American Watermarks 1690-1835" states:

A watermark...was a flat (nearly two-dimensional) outline of an image (e.g., a flower, or an animal), or coat of arms, or letters, or numbers formed of thin, malleable wire and then attached with even thinner wire to the surface of the paper mould. When the papermaker dipped the mould into the vat of stuff (or slurry) from which paper was made, the watermark's wires left their very slight impression in one side of the emergent sheet of paper. Because the resulting sheet was slightly thinner where the watermark wires had been, the watermark was clearly visible when the paper was held up to light."

The above book might also help determine the maker of the original watermark that was forged.

Best,

George

On Monday, July 31, 2006, at 03:47 PM, [EricNumis@aol.com](mailto:EricNumis@aol.com) wrote:

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- > My best            Eric